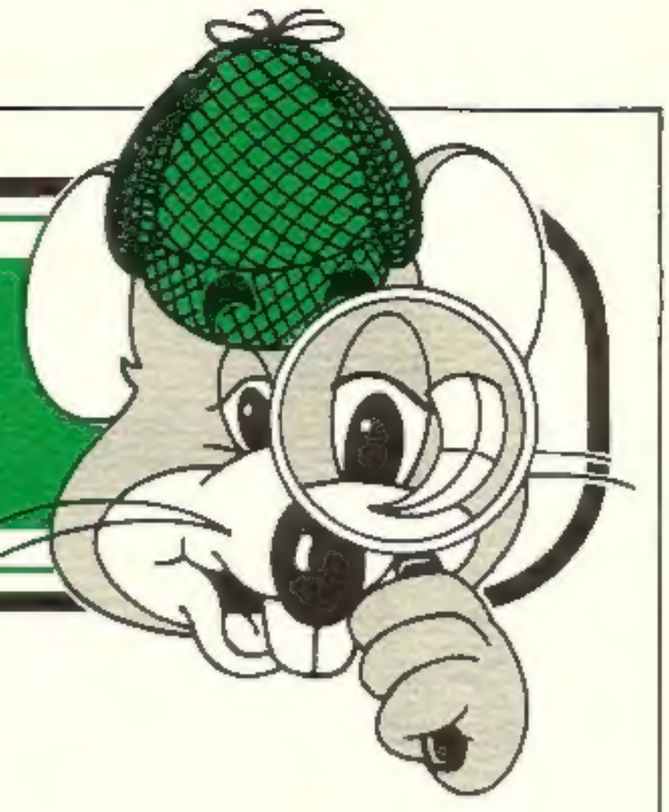
The Games Examiner



Sente Technologies and its First Game are Introduced

The new "Rollerbowl" target bowling game that is the first effort of Sente Technologies (Pizza Time Theatre's games manufacturing division) was a huge success at last November's International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) show in Kansas City. Sente Technologies chose this largest of amusement park and attraction shows to introduce itself to the industry and was rewarded with much praise by potential customers for Rollerbowl. Sente will next demonstrate Rollerbowl at the Amusement Operators Expo show in Chicago this March.

This newly-formed division of Pizza Time Theatre, Inc. will be producing Rollerbowl as well as other games in the future. You might be familiar with Rollerbowl, since it was called "Chuck E. Cheese Roll " in the days when it was available only to corporate-owned Pizza Time Theatres. The company-created game was first distributed to this limited market beginning last April, but will now go into greater production to accommodate orders from franchise stores and other game operators.

Rollerbowl has intricate engineering. It offers many exciting options such as ticket dispensers, sound effects, a flashing beacon and custom plexiglass and paint. The number of balls and winning scores can be adjusted for each game. Rollerbowl is easily serviced from the front of the unit.

Pizza Time Theatre, the largest user of target bowling games, will continue to offer Rollerbowl to its company and franchised stores under the name "Chuck E. Cheese Roll ." There are currently 240 of these games in operation. It is hoped that Pizza Time Theatre will be both the largest user and the largest producer of this type of game!

Sente Technologies was formed last November and occupies a 70,000-square-foot production facility in Hollister, California. Directing the division is Pete Mirrione. To answer questions about prices and orders, call (408) 637-BOWL.

Interchangeable Cassette System "Recycles" Games

Data East's interchangeable cassette system can help operators overcome the problem of game saturation. This system reprograms printed circuit boards into new games. The company's 55 design engineers plan to produce two new games each month for evaluation and testing.

"Burger Time" is the first major interchangeable hit by Data East. It features Peter Pepper as the chef who runs up and down ladders and across ingredients to stack up hamburgers. His antagonists are Mr. Hot Dog, Mr. Pickle and Mr. Egg. To temporarily put them out of commission, Peter sprinkles them with his limited supply of hot pepper.

Intensive pre-testing in the Japanese market revealed that the game's popularity was beyond Data East's production capacity. Thus a licensing agreement was arranged with Bally/Midway to simultaneously co-produce the game. Bally's version will not feature the interchangeable cassette.

Data East has also reserved the right to further license Burger Time to Mattel for the home market. The game attracts all ages and players. It is different from the shoot-'em-ups and the maze-type of games but still offers both visual appeal and great fun.

Originally a software company, Data East first entered the video game market with popular Astrofighter. It was produced in a cocktail table model, with the upright version licensed to Sega. Data East is the two and a half year old subsidiary of seven-year-old Data East Japan.

Keeping you informed of new developments in the ever-changing games industry is important for your business. It was for this reason that the Games Examiner was created.

Address information you have to share or questions you would like answered to Inda Trinwith, director of games administration, 1213 Innsbruck Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94086, (408) 744-7300.

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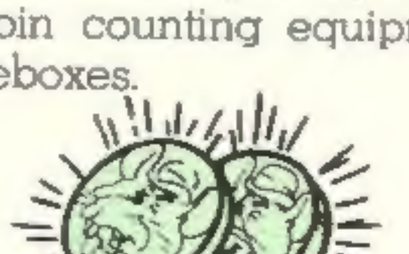
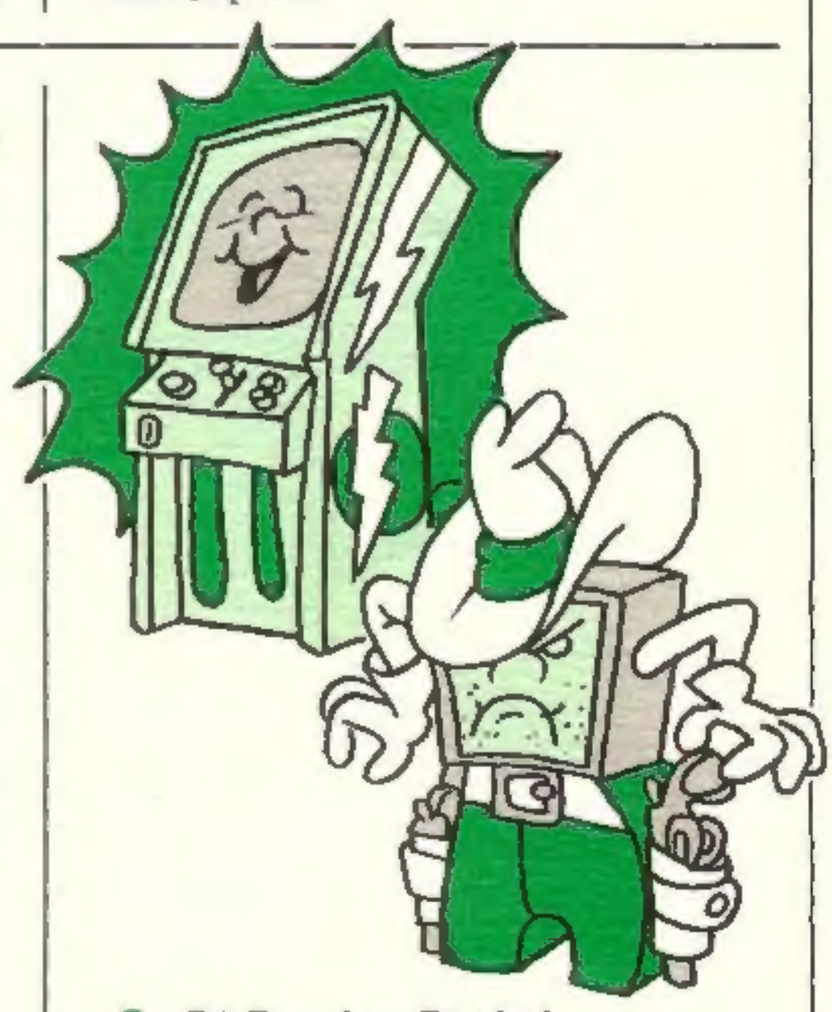
Chicago Show Biggest Ever

The recent Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) show at Chicago's Hyatt Regency Hotel was the largest ever held. There were 1,235 booths representing 143 companies. The spectator turnout set new records. Exhibitions included video and arcade games, kiddie rides, coin counting equipment and jukeboxes.



The suite hosted by Pizza Time Theatre gave corporate and franchise attendees the opportunity to meet one another, analyze the exhibition and discuss future industry trends. To those of us at the show, it appeared that the most promising new video games were:



- Q* Bert by Gottlieb
- Pole Position by Atari
- Super Pac-Man by Midway
- Popeye by Nintendo
- Millipede by Atari
- Super Zaxxon by Sega
- Front Line by Taito
- Time Pilot by Centuri
- Buck Rogers by Sega
- Burger Time by Data East and Midway

Dear Gabby Games

Dear Gabby,

How can we prevent the recurring problem of game theft?

Jim Carey
Area Gameroom Coordinator
PTT—Southern California

Dear Jim,

A. Gameroom security is indeed becoming a greater concern for gameroom operators...

Scenario: A truck driver arrives during the lunch hour rush. He says he is from a game company (ficticious) and asks to see the manager. The manager is busy supervising kitchen operations and asks the technician to take care of the matter. The driver shows a piece of paper which looks like a pick-up order with a couple of scribbled signatures on it. Being a reliable and helpful tech, he helps load the wanted game on the truck. The driver thanks him and takes off.

This is a typical game theft that happens every day. Games are disappearing by the hundreds from arcades as well as route locations. The thieves take advantage of the busiest time of day to make their move. This type of crime is happening at an increasingly alarming rate all over the country, and if preventative action isn't taken, we too could fall victim to this type of theft. Therefore, take action immediately to safeguard your operation. Here are a few ways that could help:

a. Know your inventory:
Make sure you have an inventory list with manufacturer's serial numbers recorded.

b. Be sure that employees are familiar with pick-up and delivery procedures and documentation.

c. Identify anyone requesting a game pick-up. Ask for identification such as a driver's license, business card or a work badge.

d. Awareness:
Inform employees of the possibility of this happening to "keep an eye out."

e. Questions:
If there are any doubts about a game, call someone you know who can verify a pick-up.

AOE Upcoming Trade Show

The Fourth Annual Amusement Operators Expo (AOE) on March 25–27 is the next major games trade show. It will take place at the O'Hare Expo Center in Chicago and is sponsored by "Playmeter" magazine.

This expo is very operator-oriented and offers many informative seminars by experienced industry people. Sente Technologies, Pizza Time Theatre's games manufacturing arm, will be exhibiting Rollerbowls. We look forward to meeting many of our franchisees at the Pizza Time Theatre suite at the Hyatt O'Hare.

A Note to Franchise Technicians

From Fred McCord, Director of Technical Operations

ABSTRUSE: *adj.,* difficult to understand

Are you finding any part of your job abstruse? Do you have any problem understanding

- Games?
- Cyberamics?
- Troubleshooting?
- New systems?
- Test equipment?
- Or *anything*?

Let me know! I'll be holding two information-filled days of discussions on March 23–24 at the O'Hare Hilton in Chicago just prior to the Amusement Operators Expo (AOE).

- *Bob Salmons of Atari*
- Bob Norton of Midway

will participate in these sessions. They will be providing insights into their systems and answering your questions.

Since these two days are designed for YOU, I'd like your feedback. Will you attend? What subjects are you most interested in? Do you have a hotel preference? Please fill out the enclosed postpaid card and return it as soon as possible.

Remember Murphy's Law #409: "Inside every large problem is a small problem struggling to get out!" (STAR TECH Journal, November, 1982)

These sessions will hopefully make your problems tiny ones. I look forward to seeing you there.

– Fred McCord

Super Pac-Man (Bally/ Midway)

Rather than the usual white dots, Super Pac-Man mazes are made of fruits and goodies and contain *four* energy dots. This gives Pac-Man power to chomp both pursuing monsters and two super dots. When Pac-Man eats a "super" dot, he becomes "Super Pac-Man" and 10 times his normal size.

Burger Time (Data East and Midway)

Players attempt to build a hamburger by manipulating Peter Pepper, the jogging chef, over the ingredients and stacking them on the plates below. It will leave players hungry for more. The game is manufactured by Data East in the Deco Cassette system and by Midway in a conventional system.

Games Update

Pengo (Sega)

This maze variation game features a little red penguin from the South Pole. The object is to maneuver Pengo around and through a series of ice blocks. He must eliminate his pursuers — the Snow Bees — by pushing the ice blocks against them. Chilly fun!

Q*Bert (Gottlieb)

The little character of Q*Bert starts his journey on top of a 3-D pyramid of vividly colored blocks. He must hop from cube to cube, changing the color as he goes. His task is complicated by several sinister characters. Gottlieb rightly says, "Q*Bert Qollects Quarters!"

Pole Position (Atari)

This high-performance race offers all the open-wheel competition thrills of Grand Prix. Awesome speed and spectacular excitement. Pole Position is manufactured in both the upright and cockpit styles.

Popeye (Nintendo)

The popular cartoon characters are brought back. Popeye tries to capture the hearts Olive Oyl hurls to the wind while Brutus rivals him. But Popeye can knock him out by eating a can of spinach.

Buck Rogers (Sega)

Buck pilots a remote controlled space ship around the Planet of Zoom. Using a two-level speed control and a responsive pilot's control stick, the plucky hero races his ship into and out of heavily armed channels.

Eliminating False Error Statements on Tron

Midway's new MCR 11 system (as used on Tron and other new games) can indicate a false error statement if the dip switches on the sound board are left in the wrong position. When the game is powered up, the error message comes up (sound board interface error). It flashes on the screen. The game also has no sound. If this has happened to you, check switch bank #3 at location D14 on the sound I/O board. Switches 1, 2, 3 & 4 should be in the "off" position for normal play. In most cases, this will clear the error statement. If not, check another possible trouble area: the Z80 CPU on the sound I/O board.

Tron Control Handle Troubles

The control handle on Midway's Tron has a tendency to crack near the screw hole. Early inspection will help eliminate down time caused by a broken handle.

Game Tips

Partial Image Loss on Tempest

Are some of the rims of the tube rails missing on Tempest's playfields? Such as the first circular playfield missing its top rim? A self-test will show an E in the middle of the screen. This indicates that the EROM at location C-3 on the auxiliary PCB is defective. Replacing the EROM does not correct the problem.

The solution to the problem lies outside the auxiliary PCB. There are two probable causes: the interboard connector to J-19 on the main PCB has shorted or has open wires; or the transceiver IC H-2 (74LS245 or AM8304B) on the main board has failed.

Unwanted Hum-bars on Ms. Pac-Man

If your Ms. Pac-Man has developed hum-bars in the monitor, first check for a bad monitor. If the monitor is good, check the fuse block. The game will still function with one of the fuses blown. This is because the game uses a center-tapped transformer with fused 7-Vac and 15-Vac outputs. It is rectified and filtered for the +5VDC and +12VDC regulator inputs. If half the wave is missing, the filter cap may not charge to a high enough DC voltage, causing the +5VDC regulator to "drop out" and result in hum-bars on the video display.

Centipede Picture Reversal

If the picture on the monitor of an upright Centipede game flips back and forth, check pins Z and 15 on the large 44-pin connector. Make sure these two pins are connected.

A Silent Dig Dug

If Atari's Dig Dug loses its sound, change cap C-11 on new PCBs (AO38575) or cap C-13 on old-style PCB (AO38156). This is not the only cause of loss of sound but this type of cap does have a higher failure rate than might be expected.

Game Operations Director Ken Wagener to Boost Gameroom Performance

Ken Wagener's recent promotion to the newly-created position of director of game operations should strengthen the performance of the gamerooms. Ken's department is conducting an initial test among the eight company-owned stores in the South Bay Area in California. If successful, this new operational approach will be used in other corporate locations.

Ken will appoint a gameroom manager for each store who has technical abilities. This person will not only be responsible for the hiring and training of gameroom and general store personnel but will set up and perform the necessary preventive maintenance on the games and Cyberamics systems. Technicians will cover one or two stores and report to an area manager, who, in turn, has responsibility for the technical and operational side of the gameroom. Ken believes this new organizational structure will result in improvements in the gameroom, with more operational games and better maintenance.

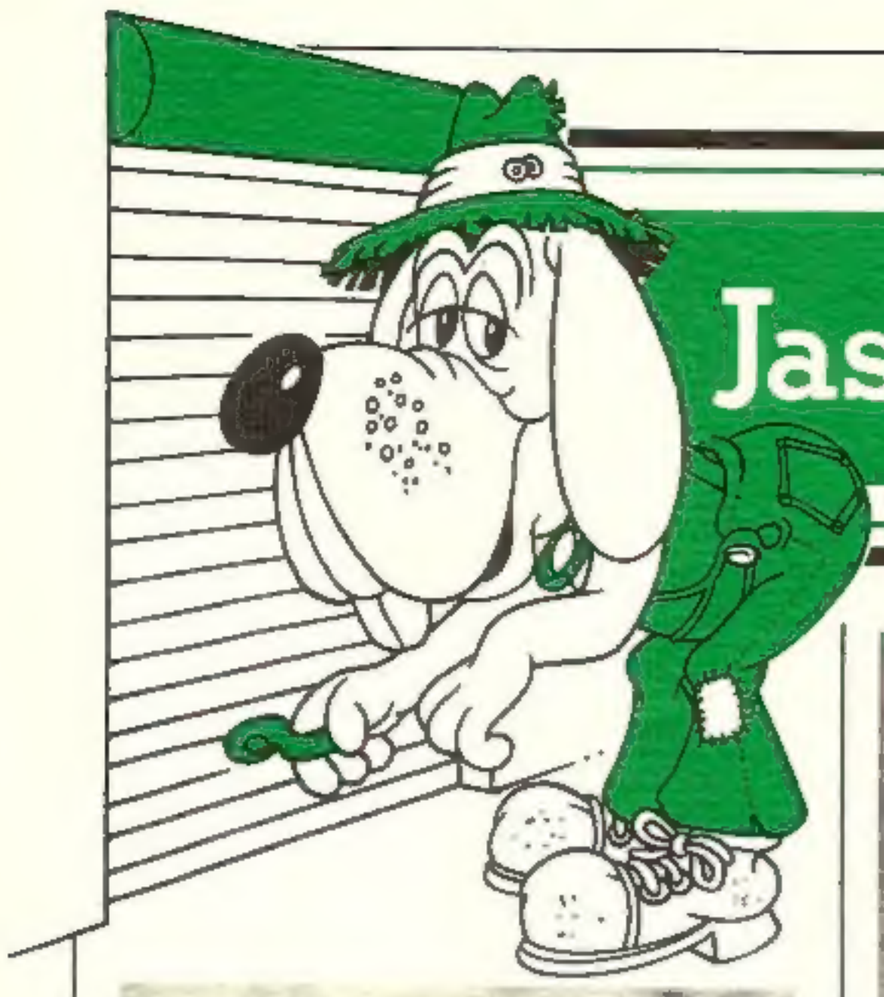
Ken is also working on a new gameroom manual and the development of training materials. He joined Pizza Time Theatre two and a half years ago in the Training Department and has since helped open new stores and inspected existing ones all over the country for the Franchise Department. Ken was formerly involved with marketing and game operations for Marriott's Great America theme park in Santa Clara, California.

Fred McCord Appointed Director of Technical Operations

The company's new director of technical operations is Fred McCord, whose experience and knowledge of the industry will help Pizza Time Theatre's technical maintenance keep pace with its phenomenal growth. Fred has spent the last eight years running the field service department at Atari, Inc. He is probably best known in the industry for his role in starting the Atari Service Schools and developing the firm's technical training programs.

His new position here will involve implementing similar programs and support services. "I want to make sure Pizza Time Theatre has a network of the right people with the right combination of technical and management expertise to keep the maintenance standards high at every location," Fred explained. He feels that with good management and technical training programs, the organization will continue its strong advantage in the business and show significant results in the marketplace.

Fred will oversee the technical support for games as well as for the other special products developed by Pizza Time Theatre. His goal "is to demand higher and higher quality standards as one way of continuing our leadership in the industry."



Jasper's General Store

New Beer Stein with Chuck E. Cheese

Chuck E. and his pals Jasper T. Jowls and Pasqually go German as pictured on this hand-painted beer stein. Order yours soon. Part #940-5007. Cost: $2.33 each.

The Chuck E. Pencil

This orange and red Chuck E. Pencil puts a whole new outlook on writing. It has a large eraser and colorful tassel. Part #240-4018-01. Cost: 23¢ each.

....And Something to Hold it

The perfect place to put the Chuck E. Pencil is the Chuck E. Cheese Pencil Case. It will also nicely hold pens, rulers and other school supplies. It comes in assorted colors. Part #940-3077-01. Cost: 72¢ each.

"Smile, America" T-Shirt

This popular t-shirt says "Smile America, Say Chuck E. Cheese" and was introduced at the 1982 Hawaii convention. It is now available in all sizes. Cost: $2.10 each.

Attractive Lucite Paperweight

For those important people you want to impress, Pizza Time Theatre introduces the executive paperweight, made of lucite and pewter featuring Chuck E. Cheese. This practical and attractive gift costs $5.40 each. Part #940-4017-01.

SMILE AMERICA Say Chuck E. Cheese

Future Finds

This year will be a big one for Jasper's General Store. We wil be introducing plush toys, irresistible candy items and other merchandise for customers of all ages.

THE GAMES EXAMINER

(Sente Feature)

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